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Connie Kelley, Acquisitions Librarian, Alderman Library, University of Virginia

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Against the Grain

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Interview with Connie Kelley

Acquisitions Librarian — University of Virginia

by Katina Strauch

She's vivacious; she's smart; and she likes change. I got inspired just talking to her! — KS

ATG: *Yo, Connie! Just heard about the reorganization of your department. Tell us about it!*

CK: It's an interesting time to be alive. I'm not real sure where it all originated, but there is a growing desire on the part of the library administration to devote more library resources to customer service. It used to be that serials acquisition was part of Cataloging and monographic acquisitions was part of Collection Development. It was all spread out. So, we decided to merge serials and monograph acquisitions into one department. And then, three days after I returned from the **Charleston Conference**, Preservation and Binding became part of my group as well! We are now a mega acquisitions group. The former Collection Development Department doesn't exist anymore (selectors have been incorporated into the Research and Information Services department). And Acquisitions is not just serving the Alderman library, our main library. It's been defined as part of the core group called Central Services meaning that we will do acquisitions for branch libraries like Fine Arts and Science and Engineering as well as for the humanities and social sciences. There are four core groups in central services — acquisitions, cataloging, ILL, and library administration.

Prior to this reorganization, there was a perception of acquisitions as serving just the Alderman library group, so we are trying to refocus and change the perceptions of everybody else so that the impression is clear that we serve the entire university library operation.

One of the difficulties is just plain logistics. We need to try to get all of the parts together physically. Monograph acquisitions used to be on the second floor, serials was on the fourth floor, and preservation and binding was on both the first and fifth. Binding will have to stay where it is because with all the material coming and going they need to be close to the loading dock. But we're trying to consolidate other services. So there's a lot of banging and knocking and moving going on.

We're in an old building (built 1935) and we have hopes of getting a new building for the Special Collections Department, with the start of our Capital Campaign this past October. We hope that we can raise the money to build that new library and gain the vacated space for the University Library's other needs.

ATG: *We are trying to raise money for a new library building at the College as well. It's interesting that we are still projecting the need for space for print books and journals in spite of all our electronic resources.*

CK: Yes, it is, isn't it. My sense is that a lot of libraries are looking at financing new buildings. For us, the Capital Campaign



has been wonderful because its opening focused on the Library and growth and rebuilding. You see, one hundred years ago Thomas Jefferson's Rotunda burned to the ground. That was October 27, 1895. Strangely, the fire revitalized the university and brought parts of it together. The Library was in the Rotunda on the top floor and lost two-thirds of its collection but had 17,000 volumes saved, having been carried out by students. Students also carried out the one-ton statue of Thomas Jefferson and only chipped off one corner of his coat-tail. The Rotunda was rebuilt in the years after the fire and was finally restored to its original Jefferson design, being completed in 1976 in time for Queen Elizabeth II to come and visit. Now the library has over 4 million volumes plus a massive collection of historical papers and manuscripts as well as very important collections of historical and liter-

ary works.

Since our building is old, structural changes have kind of been pieced together over the years. We always seem to be about thirty years behind with stack space. We have five main floors in the library and ten stack floors. A stack addition of ten floors which was completed in 1968 was 80% full when we opened. We even have remote storage (the "ivy" stacks, named after the street where the building is located). [It kind of reminds me of my personal belongings. I am trying to get rid of twenty boxes of books and other things I haven't used in several years, but there are always things (like your turkey roaster) that you need and when you need it there is no substitute.] As to space and electronic publishing, the vast majority of publishing output is still print with microform a close second. Electronic publishing hasn't reduced the availability of print, it has merely increased the sources of information. A weird thing about publishers of electronic information is that many times the availability of the electronic subscription is dependent on keeping the print product so there is no space saving whatsoever. Electronic publishing is still in its infancy and still suffering what look like teething pains. For example, there seems to be little that is standardized about pricing or packaging or licensing, although producers seem to be getting a little more relaxed about restrictions to use.

ATG: *Tell us about your department? How many people work there and what are their job duties?*

CK: The new Acquisitions Department contains eight staff each from the original monograph and serials acquisitions sections, two from the Payment Office and five from the Preservation and Binding unit. There are also about 20 FTE students. We added to this a high level Departmental Secretary who handles personnel matters as well as **Lynda Clendenning** as Head of the Department. We have an additional two positions that are vacant at this time. A total of 27 plus the students. We handle all of the traditional acquisition functions and have taken on as well the FastCat operation for the

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Library. So the Department is handling all acquisition of library materials from issuing the original order through receipt and most cataloging and final shelf preparation as well. Additionally, all invoice payment processing, and binding, mending and preservation activities. About the only receiving and processing that we are not doing is that involved in depository government documents and

"It's an interesting time to be alive."

of the contracts, licenses and vendor negotiations and relations. I am working more with the University's Department of Purchasing and Materials Services, and expect to do even more so in the future. All of this is, naturally, subject to change.

ATG: So, tell us about your budget for materials. How much money are you spending for book, journal, and electronic resources?

CK: We have a materials budget of over 5 million dollars. About 2 million is for serials and the remainder is for books, electronic products, and certain support services for the electronic products including computer searching and document delivery. This is the first year that document delivery search services and other non-material has been handled through the book budget. These are allocated as a line item and we are spending about \$100,000. About \$63,000. is allocated for computer-based serial resources.

This whole scenario has happened as a part of this avalanche of change that we are all going through. We are now running all of those charges through our book fund system so that we can track it on a timely basis. Now that we are handling it all through our fund accounting system, I get to see all of the bills, all of the document delivery charges, all of the charges for computer searching, memberships, binding supplies, equipment in direct support of user services - things like the cost of the CD towers for public support, computers. The library emphasis is veering much more toward direct service to the user and both the staff and the budget are reflecting that shift.

ATG: How much of the materials budget is for support of electronic products? And how much of it is for the actual electronic product?

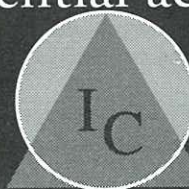
CK: We are currently spending close to \$500,000 for support of electronic products. That's including the equipment which is the big ticket expenditure. Another \$500,000 goes to memberships and other assorted weirdnesses. We spend about two million dollars for books that are really monographic — books, CDs, microforms — non-serials regardless of format.

The actual amount that we spend on non-book resources is a small percentage of that. On actual CDs and computer files, we spent about \$68,000. We spent more than twice that amount on manuscripts (\$140,000), \$400,000 on microforms, \$11,500 on slides to support the art and architecture area, \$850 on maps, \$16,500 on sound recordings, \$107,000 on videos.

Of the serials budget, we spent almost \$300,000 for computer serials — things like CD-ROMs, updates, \$72,000 for microformat, and the rest on print materials. We have been fairly conservative about the number of computer materials that we have added. We haven't been at it long enough to have a good grasp of how such

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things are used compared to non-electronic materials and it will reach a point where this information becomes necessary.

ATG: What are some of the computer serials that you subscribe to? What's the total number? Any electronic journals?

CK: At this point, it is somewhat difficult to come up with a list of the serials, but at a guess: *Congressional Masterfile*, *Statistical Masterfile*, *Global Books in Print*, *Psychlit*, *Global Explorer*, *Ethnic Newswatch*, *Broadcast News*, *Current Contents*, *Social Science Citation Index*, *Knowledge Index*, *Newsbank*.

"Electronic publishing hasn't reduced the availability of print."

These are some of the electronic/CD-ROM titles to which we subscribe. There is also a growing number of straight online electronic titles: *LC Cataloging Newslines*, *Academe This Week*, *Electronic Antiquity*, *Bryn Mawr Classical Computer Review*, *Current Cites*, *Minor Planet Electronic Circulars*, *EDUPAGE*, *Blue Penny Quarterly*. An increasing number of depository document serials are also being issued on CD-ROM.

ATG: So have you had to cut serials? And what about the document delivery model that Chuck Hamaker discussed at the Charleston Conference [dropping subscriptions for document delivery]? Are you going to do anything like that?

CK: Not surprisingly, we've had to cut serials. In the past ten years, we've had three major serials cuts. Two years ago we cut \$280,000 worth of serials. At the time we had very few computer products so all the cuts were in print products. I'd like to see Chuck's presentation in print. I was impressed by what he was saying about asking faculty to identify what they needed rather than what they thought should be cut — sort of zero-based budgeting of serials titles.

ATG: Virginia has done a lot with electronic texts. You have the Virtual Library in Virginia (VIVA) and you have an electronic text center. Can you tell us about these initiatives? Are you involved in them?

CK: Oh yes and with this reorganization I expect to be more involved in it all. In addition to the electronic text center, we have a geographical information center, a digital information center, and a mixed media center. We also have a large Fine Arts library dealing with art, architecture and drama which is reducing its large slide collection to digitized images. These items are not available commercially. And the library has just purchased a flatbed scanner for digitizing brittle books. More and more products are being developed all the time so this will just continue to grow. Like I said earlier, it's an interesting time to be alive — and to be a librarian!

VIVA — Virtual Library in Virginia — involves all of the state-supported institutions of higher education. It's a consortium arrangement and we are loading electronic products to be accessed by all those libraries. The private colleges in Virginia can also participate. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* was the first big product to be loaded. *EB* bills VIVA because the money is coming directly from the State Council on Education. The allocation is now made directly to the Consortium but there is no long-term guarantee that this will continue. *FirstSearch* (OCLC) is also brought up through VIVA. We are investigating new products all the time. The hard part is

finding producers of the information that are willing to let us load it this way. It's a pricing and copyright issue obviously. But a lot of reference type products that everybody wants to use will be made available through VIVA. There's a statewide committee that investigates what items should be purchased and made available centrally.

Unfortunately, the first licence agreement took six months to hammer out. Both the producers of electronic products and libraries who want to have access to information have to work hard to reach an agreement which pleases both of us.

ATG: What sort of review process do you use for the selection of electronic materials?

CK: We look at everything that comes out — how it would serve our clients, fit in with our collection; how we would need to mount it, network it, how to make it available. How many people would use it. This is all very important.

Selectors review all of the products brought to their attention with these, often opposing, points in mind. The decision to actually purchase a given product is generally made by the Selector in concert with other Selectors and the Systems Office if there are unusual implications for equipment or service. There is a formal approval process for any single title costing more than \$5000.00 which parallels the University's approval process for high-priced materials. The State is going to decentralized purchasing for institutions of higher education and the University is trying out various scenarios for internal control issues. The Library has always had independent purchasing authority for books, etc., so we are merely expanding our coverage.

ATG: Did I hear that you are going to a new integrated library system? Sounds like a nightmare.

CK: We are anticipating installing a new ILS in June of 1996. We are not going out on bid but are working on negotiating a contract with *SIRSI*. *William & Mary* has just gone down this route and we are interested in hearing all about it. Yes, it's an incredible hassle to change systems but our big concern is to get off

[Shrinkwrap agreements are] scary because they give the institution no opportunity to negotiate on those sections that may be a problem for them."

the main-frame. The university can't support the use that the library wants. Once a new system is resident on a server, we can do the maintenance, etc., that we really can't do now. I'm talking about electronic ordering, loading materials directly into the database. Currently we have no commitment from the computer center to handle this all on a regular, scheduled basis. We are at their mercy. They are very cooperative but there are so many demands on their time and they have been reorganized and downsized too.

ATG: Let's talk about license agreements. I know that's one of your areas of interest.

CK: Yes. We are playing the contract negotiation game here. It's very different, very detailed, very time-consuming, and the kinds of things that people want to have in a contract are frequently not mentioned in a multi-million dollar book purchasing agreement. Even *LC* wants you to sign that you won't violate the copyright of the products that you use. You can't sit on things and not sign them. And some of the publishers just have one person

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responsible for ALL of their accounts which means that you have to follow up to make sure that your patrons have access.

Right now, I am working on getting signatory authority in the library. At present, we need to run all contracts through someone who represents the legal office. The university has a chief contracting officer. Contracts get pushed back and forth, buried. The contracting officer is responsible for everything like this so he or she is incredibly rushed and is more interested in the legalese, the indemnities, waivers and what state's law is involved (they only want to deal in Virginia!). I have to look at the whole contract and find out the kind of equipment that is used, the number of simultaneous users, etc. We would like to get away from having to run everything through the contracting officer. It would be better for everyone. And that's just the agreements that we know about and that we have to sign. There are all those "shrinkwrap" agreements that come in the door with the material!

ATG: Yes. Let's talk about those.

CK: Shrinkwrap agreements are something else again. They aren't negotiated. It comes with the packaging of the product and more and more of the major producers are going to this kind of agreement. It is scary because it gives the institution no opportunity to negotiate on those sections that may be a problem for them.

Tricia Davis at Ohio has done a lot of work on this issue. I was talking to Lolly Gasaway [one of the speakers] at the Charleston Conference about this. Lolly says in the next year there may be a change in the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) which may give shrinkwrap agreements more force. This whole area is a big problem. Once you open a package, you've supposedly already agreed to something that you haven't read until you opened it! Often we have students opening the mail and part of their job is to take shrinkwrap off and they don't read the agreements. I am starting to file the agreements right now. I have a four-drawer filing cabinet just for contracts and I've only been at this since July and have already filled up the first drawer! It's a question of how many of the contracts are still alive? What happens when the company ceases to exist? And what about products that are bundled together when you buy them? I have a lot of concerns about these things because in any given library nobody knows what is happening with all of them. For a control freak like me, this is a problem!

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and a junior in high school. We are just beginning to investigate colleges for him. His ideal college is some place that is warm and has an easily accessible golf course. There are obviously some "family" discussions in our future.

In my spare time I do a number of things. Several years ago I formed a book group. Six of us meet monthly and discuss our latest book (last month was Robert Owen Butler's *Good Scent from a Strange Mountain*) and drink Oregon wines and beer. These are ideal evenings. In addition I play tennis on a regular basis with another group of friends and recently have exchanged running for

ATG: You were organizing an acquisitions librarian support group in Virginia?

CK: Yes, before I got married. I was organizing an acquisitions librarians support group. Now David is taking up my spare time. But the support group did have a mini meeting in Charleston. I hope to have another meeting in the Spring and to get together with more of the Acquisitions Librarians throughout the year. All of us are rather pushed these days, as you well know, so getting a local meeting together gets set aside. We do talk a lot by phone and email, but face-to-face is more than we can manage most of the time. Thanks to you, we still have the Charleston Conference!

David and I just bought a 24 by 24 foot "getaway" house in the country about two and half miles from the Chesapeake Bay. Bought it from a man who didn't think he wanted to sell! We are moving furniture into it this weekend. It's interesting that the things that you have an excess of are not what you need!

ATG: Isn't that true! Before we sign off, tell us more. What are you reading? What are your hobbies? Whatever you want to tell us ...

CK: Actually, I am one of those librarians who really likes to read! There seems to be less time for this since David entered my life as we do spend a lot of time talking and laughing, so it's not a dead loss! I never miss a new Joan Hess or Rita Mae Brown mystery and CAN squeeze them into the spare minutes. I have been painting shirts for the women in the family for Christmas presents and do enjoy it, but should have got started sooner as there are a lot of women in David's family — 9 to be exact. This is something that I would like to get into on a money-making basis when time allows — maybe I will retire someday. It hardly seems fair that I've been working at the University for 30 years and STILL can't retire. Especially when I share a house with two retired people and three cats who don't know the meaning of the word WORK. Since David and I between us own three houses and live in a fourth, the chances of any more spare time seem unlikely — just enough for a few books, a few shirts, some sailing, and lots of laughter. 🐾

Well, Connie says that she has so many tools (when you put hers and David's together, plus she inherited her Dad's!) that she could start a construction company! Is she using remote storage?

biking. I try to keep intellectually and physically busy all of the time. I find having a number of different groups and activities gives me new perspectives. In all, I feel very lucky to be in a business and job I love, living in an unparalleled part of the world, and having a wonderful family. I am really a very lucky and fortunate person. 🐾

Y'all, you know, a lot of this interview is true! For example, we had to wind up so that Dan could go play tennis at the end of the day. So be careful when you write him an e-mail at <danh@acbc.com> He might zap it right back! — KS

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